

Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy
Stakeholders Meeting
May 29, 2002
Cleary Intl. Centre – Windsor, Ontario
Remarks: R. C. Stempel

GLBTS PROCESS ALLOWS IMAGINATIVE SOLUTIONS BY INDUSTRY

- Good afternoon everyone!
- Thank you for inviting me to join in the celebration of the Fifth Anniversary of the Great Lakes Binational Toxics Strategy, or “Binational Toxics Strategy” for short.
- We, in industry, believe there is a lot to celebrate. The Binational Toxics Strategy has been truly ground breaking in working toward virtual elimination of the discharge of persistent bio-accumulating toxic substances.
- Now, is our work complete? No, there is still more to do; but we have made great progress, and the lakes are improving. So, as we celebrate the Fifth Anniversary, let us also celebrate the approach we used with the Binational Toxics Strategy. The unique approach allowed industry to develop creative solutions --- three aspects of this unique approach are very critical for industry.
- First, the Binational Toxics Strategy is multi-stakeholder. The collaborative, multi-stakeholder process is the most unique feature of the Strategy. It is the reason that all of you are gathered together in this room. It is a process we were familiar with; but not always comfortable with. This time it has worked, and is a process in which the region’s industries would like to continue to be involved.
- Our commitment to multi-stakeholder processes is easy to see because of the effort that The Council of Great Lakes Industries put into the establishment of what is often referred to as the “Boulder Principles.” This document was needed because we believe environmental policy development requires the involvement of a broad

range of stakeholders with varying points of view. Many times those multi-stakeholders are not accustomed to working together and since our society has real needs and objectives to be achieved, we thought there was a need for a process.

- The Council of Great Lakes Industries, along with the U.S. Council for International Business and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, sponsored two workshops with multiple stakeholders representing environmental activists, Native Americans, governments, industry, churches and others. The workshops produced both principles and procedural guidelines for effective international public policy dialogues. Since the development of the Boulder Principles with clear guidelines for such processes, CGLI has worked to broadly apply these principles in multi-stakeholder arenas.
- The Principles allow diverse stakeholders to work together to create public policy on environmental issues in a fair and equitable process that results in better public policy. We think multi-stakeholder is the way to go. And the Binational Toxics Strategy process is proving us right.
- Second, targets timetables. Besides being multi-stakeholder, the Binational Toxics Strategy has specific targets and timetables. This aspect is also very important to industry. Industry is accustomed to setting targets and working to reach those targets. We put together plans for production, profits, environment health and safety, and then put our resources to work to meet or exceed those targets. The targets of the Binational Toxics Strategy give industry the needed focus and realistic end points that industry can understand and work toward. Of course, meeting these targets is critical to the progress of the Binational Toxics Strategy.
- Third, the process is voluntary. Or should I say what is truly voluntary is how we all get the job done – not whether or not the job needs to be done. Industry likes the voluntary aspect of this process. It allows us to allot our resources where we feel we can make the most improvement. Industry is also very aware that if we do not perform in this bold, new context we can retreat to pure “Command and Control” approaches. Comments from this morning’s panel indicate that Environmental Canada and U.S. E.P.A. also like the voluntary aspects.
- And, we all must realize, for all the excitement we feel for this unique Binational Toxics Strategy process, it is very fragile. Any of the stakeholder groups -- industry, environmental groups, government -- can pull out and make real progress much more difficult to achieve.

But, we've all respected the needs of our Great Lakes ecosystem and stuck with the Binational Toxic Strategy – that's impressive!

- These same three characteristics have generated impressive results that are beginning to show up in the ecosystem. I would like to summarize what we heard this morning, because these results are truly significant, showing progress from our collective efforts.
- The challenges for the **named pesticides** have been met as Ted Smith, U.S. E.P.A., reported this morning. There is no longer any use or release in the U.S. or Canada. All uses have been cancelled and production facilities in the U.S. have been closed. There were no production facilities in Canada. Unused stocks and contaminated sites are the remaining issues.
- Ted also reported the challenges for **alkyl-lead** have been met. It is no longer used in automotive gasoline. Work is continuing to find substitutes for leaded racing gasoline and a safe alternative to leaded aviation fuel.
- There is no longer any use or release of **octachlorostyrene** in the U.S. In Canada, potential sources have been identified that still require testing to confirm that releases do not exist. The massive decline in environmental levels of OCS has been documented and indicates virtual elimination of releases.
- As Anita Wong, EC, mentioned this morning; the U.S. has reduced dioxin by 77%, exceeding the challenge goal of 75% by 2006. In Canada, the 90% challenge goal for 2000 --- an aggressive target, was met for water releases, but releases to air and soil have not yet met the target; however, the plans are in place. Progress is being made as reductions from anthropogenic sources are sought. Current efforts are concentrating on public information campaigns to eliminate backyard burn barrels that Ms. Wong detailed this morning, the highest remaining release source.
- The U.S. is currently close to meeting the release challenge of a 50% reduction in the use of **mercury** by 2006. Meeting the 50% reduction in the release of mercury from sources resulting from human activity is difficult to verify and work continues on the pursuit of release and use reductions in the U.S. and Canada, as Alexis Cain, U.S. E.P.A., discussed this morning. The Canadian challenge of 90% reduction in releases was not met by 2000, but reduction efforts are continuing and have reached 78%.

- The U.S. challenge for **PCBs** of a 90% reduction of high level PCBs is expected to be met by 2006. Efforts are focusing on electrical equipment removal commitments. Canada did not meet the 90% challenge by 2000 but 84% of high level wastes were destroyed, as we heard from Ken De, EC this morning. Removal commitments and destruction quantities will continue to be tracked.
- There is still work to be done on reductions in **HCB** [hexachlorobenzene] and **B(a)P** [benzo(a)pyrene] releases in the basin. The U.S. confirms that petroleum refining is not a significant B(a)P source. The HCB target has also been met but pesticide release concerns are still being addressed. This morning, Tom Tseng, EC, noted that in Canada B(a)P releases have been reduced by 45% compared to the goal of 90% by 2000; but we all have more to do. Canada is close to meeting its 90% goal for HCB recording 65% reduction. Strategic Option Reports are being implemented for steel mills and wood preservers.
- These are great results. Thanks to a great deal of hard work by multi-stakeholders, our Great Lakes ecosystem is improving.
- How has this progress been achieved? The Binational Toxics Strategy is not a normal government program but is rather a compendium of environmental regulations, substance reduction programs and voluntary efforts. We believe that important progress has occurred because three things have happened under the GLBTS banner.
- First, we have focused on updating our knowledge of sources through intensive workgroup activity. Together we didn't waste our efforts solving the problems of the previous decade that had already been addressed. We have worked to accurately identify sources so that money and time have been devoted to real issues and real solutions. We are able to establish valid priorities.
- Second, we have brought representatives from whole segments of our economic society to use the Binational Toxics Strategy context to modify their processes. Let me share a few examples of the results of the imaginative industry efforts.
- Alexis Cain, U.S.E.P.A., detailed how the chloral kali industry has reduced mercury use by 75 % over the base years of 1990-95. The goal was a 50% reduction and it has been achieved and surpassed, four years early. This achievement, reported by the Chlorine Institute, was made possible by diligent work by their member companies, sharing of information and technology between companies, and process and systems improvements.

- The battery industry phased out its use of mercury in batteries by 1993. As a result, mercury from old alkaline batteries in the waste stream continues to decline and 91% of the batteries have no added mercury.
- Lamp manufactures have reduced their use of mercury in lamps by 67% between 1990 and 2001 from approximately 27 tons to 9 tons.
- In 2001 the Thermostat Recycling Corporation collected and processed over 48,000 thermostats containing over 400 pounds of mercury. Since the TRC started operations in 1998, it has collected 120,000 thermostats containing over 1,000 pounds of mercury.
- Auto manufacturers have phased out the use of mercury switches in vehicles. The last application ends with this model year. Auto manufacturers have also agreed to phase out the use of PCB equipment at manufacturing facilities.
- Steel mills have agreed to examine their use of PCB containing electrical equipment, seek phase-outs and share their experiences within their sector and to other industries.
- The public utility sector is developing a management program to limit dioxin release potential from poles taken out of service.
- Incinerator operators have implemented MACT standards virtually eliminating dioxins and other substances in their air emissions.
- Chemical plant processes have been changed or shutdown resulting in reduction and elimination of releases of hexachlorobenzene and octachlorostyrene.
- Pulp and paper mills have surveyed their systems to determine the sources of mercury, made changes in suppliers for chemicals and raw materials, and shared this information with industry peers.
- The third important reason for progress has been the successful building of mutual respect among stakeholders and the governments. This is no small achievement. The representatives of the various stakeholders here often disagree. Everyone wants a clean environment but we often do not agree on the solution or the process to achieve a solution. The relationships that evolved between industry, governments and the environmental community as a result of the Binational Toxics Strategy have enabled us to better understand the difficulties in meeting the Water Quality Agreement goals. We have seen the need for prioritization and,

occasionally for trade-offs. I believe these relationships will serve our region long after the Binational Toxics Strategy.

- I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the stakeholders:
 - The governments deserve great credit for taking the risk and pursuing the Strategy. Five years ago, this was a major step to look for environmental improvement for voluntary action.
 - Similarly, the environmental groups have taken risks by sticking with the process. You have respectfully listened to the issues that are important to industry and, on occasion, have supported our efforts. This is a great benefit of the Strategy.
 - And, of course, my fellow industry representatives, whose successes here make me proud to be associated with them.
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•The future: Where do we go from here? We have made progress, we are getting good data and we have strong relationships. It's obvious that although we are halfway through the 10-year Binational Toxics program we are more than halfway home on meeting the established goals and objectives of the Strategy. This situation provides us opportunities and pitfalls.

- When we have reached the Strategy goals we need to pat ourselves on the back and move on to other priorities. Chasing the last molecule is not an effective use of resources. Will we have the resolve to do so?
- Additionally, just because we have been successful in the Binational Toxics Strategy, we cannot begin to believe that this approach is the best or sole solution to Great Lakes environmental issues. There are ecosystem stressors, issues such as exotic species and land use, which need to be addressed by other vehicles in other arenas.
- Where we have had success, we need to communicate that success. When we have achieved the challenge goals, we need to let the citizens of the Great Lakes know and move on to other priorities.
- Finally, it is our hope that we take the experience, trust and knowledge we have gained in the Binational Toxics Strategy and apply it to new priorities in the Great Lakes Basin. Our experience with a structured process that includes the establishment of a scientific basis for the actions necessary, gained through the Strategy, is too valuable to drift into history. Let's harness that spirit and understanding as we deal with other emerging issues in our region. I am proud of us all for having progressed so far these past five years.
- Thank you.